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THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN MODERN LIFE

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There is no more urgent question [says Dr. McComb,¹] than the place and function of religion in the modern world. Some persons affect to think that the day of religion is past, and that at best it may still be tolerated as a valuable police measure to keep the humbler classes in order, or as an attractive element in the aesthetic outfit of the feminine mind. . . . They must be referred to a deeper study of the human soul and of the tendencies of their age. The great mass of men are convinced that religion is a reality. Their difficulties arise when they try to understand religion, and above all, when they try to bring it into vital relations with the whole realm of experience. What men are asking today is this: Granted the reality of religion, what is its contribution to modern life?

Now, the institution which claims to represent the Christian religion, to incarnate the spirit of its Founder, and to realize His ideals, is the Church. There is a widespread feeling that the Church is not substantiating these claims. When its achievements are set alongside the life and work of the Son of Man, they appear to be seriously deficient, both in quantity and in quality.

I. WANING INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH

The facts as to the inefficiency of the church today, in spite of the remarkable signs of new life which it is exhibiting, are becoming universally recognized, and will only be mentioned here. It seems that two-thirds, or some sixty million, of the population of the country are unchurched.² In our larger cities (with a population of 300,000 or more) perhaps 17 per cent of the people regularly attend church³ (Rev. Dr. R. F. Horton is quoted as saying that no more than 5 per cent of the people of London attend church regularly).⁴ It seems that only 5 per cent of the laboring class, at the

¹ *Christianity and the Modern Mind*, p. 281.

² See Dr. Thomas E. Green, "What Is to Become of the Preacher?" in *Hampton's Magazine*, August, 1911, p. 229; also Strong, *Social Progress* (1906), p. 253; *New Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, p. 224.

³ Green, *op. cit.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

most, attend church,¹ and in this class hostility to the church is regularly joined with a high regard for Jesus.² The division of the church into some one hundred and fifty different sects is coming to be felt as an insufferable obstacle to that united and concentrated efficiency characteristic of every other great social undertaking today;³ and in some towns the small scattered congregations, with disproportionate running expenses, crippled methods, and struggling underpaid ministers, are an obvious disgrace to Christianity and an insult to the intelligence and business sense of the modern world.⁴ The supply of ministers from the seminaries is relatively decreasing;⁵ yet, in these days of the rising cost of living, the average annual income of ministers the country over is only about seven hundred dollars—scarcely half of that of the average skilled mechanic—and social custom forbids the minister's wife to enter the factory or shop to supplement his meager income.⁶ But the most significant fact is the relative decline in church membership and in church benevolence, conspicuous in recent years. Although it is true that the rate of increase in membership has been, during the nineteenth century, greater than that of the population as a whole, yet within the last few years this rate of church increase has fallen behind that of the population; and the increase of benevolent and missionary contributions seems to have undergone a similar diminution.⁷

II. CHANGE OF PUBLIC ATTITUDE TOWARD RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

In the face of these conditions there is occurring a remarkable change of public sentiment toward the old forms of religion: a growing opposition to the old forms and a groping search for new. We may notice briefly here the contrast between the moral and

¹ *Ibid.*

² Plantz, *The Church and the Social Problem*, pp. 76, 79, 90, 97 ff.; also Stelzle, "The Church and the Working Man" in *New Cyclopaedia of Social Reform*, pp. 222-24.

³ Strong, *Social Progress* (1906), pp. 250-57.

⁴ Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 230 ff.

⁵ *Ibid.*; cf. *Reports of the U.S. Commissioner of Education*.

⁶ Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-25.

⁷ See *Cyclopaedia of Social Reform*, p. 224; also Strong, *op. cit.*, (1906), pp. 254, 256-57.

religious views held a few generations ago and those of today. These views of our grandfathers were marked by the following characteristics: (1) a general trust in authority, whether of the clergy or of the Bible; (2) ready submission to the church as the dominant institution of the community, and a comparatively large attendance of men, with catechetical instruction particularly in the Sunday school; (3) a prevalent belief in the mysteriously supernatural as opposed to the interpretation of the spiritual life as subject to law; (4) a belief in the natural depravity of human nature, and salvation by an unreasoning submission to divine will as interpreted by church officials; (5) a conception of the individual as substantially an isolated unit, and therefore of salvation as a matter of the "individual soul"; and (6) the general extension of the idea of external authority to cover all of the other essentially religious and moral relationships, such as marriage and divorce and the status of the wife and the children in the family. These relationships were in general rigid and marked by subjection of the weaker members to the stronger.

Perhaps the most striking fact about the new religious and moral point of view of the day is that people everywhere are feeling the old authorities to be inadequate to meet the demands of their lives. This is evident in the following particulars: (1) the decline in the authority of the church, which we have already noted; (2) the decline in the authority of the Bible as a mere collection of principles interpreted by church officials; (3) the decline in the sacredness of the betrothal as a binding agreement; (4) the increase of divorce, and refusal of the public generally to regard it solely as a disgrace; (5) the increase of personal independence of authority, in the old sense, on the part of children toward parents, wives toward husbands, citizens toward government, and all men toward God.¹

III. PRACTICAL CAUSES OF THE NEW RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINT

These changes in the point of view of the modern world cannot be profitably criticized without inquiring as to the practical causes

¹ On these points see Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, chap. iii; and cf. Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, chaps. v and vi.

and conditions that have brought them about. Within the last decade or two we have begun clearly to recognize the following:

1. A failure of the old concepts, habits and customs to sustain the individual in relations of freedom in society today. This is vigorously illustrated, as to our industrial and political relationships, by President Wilson in his recent articles on "The New Freedom."¹

The life of the nation has grown infinitely varied. It does not center now upon questions of governmental structure or of the distribution of governmental powers. It centers upon questions of the very structure and operation of society itself, of which government is only the instrument. . . . A new nation seems to have been created which the old formulas do not fit or afford a vital interpretation of. . . . There is a sense in which in our day the individual has been submerged. . . . While most men are thus submerged in the corporation, a few, a very few, are exalted to power which as individuals they could never have wielded. . . . Today, the everyday relationships of men are largely with great impersonal concerns, with organizations, not with other individual men. . . . Our laws still deal with us on the basis of the old system. . . . What this country needs above everything else is a body of laws which will look after the men who are on the make rather than with the men who are already made. . . . No country can afford to have its prosperity originated by a small controlling class. . . . In the new order government and business must be associated closely. But . . . it is an intolerable thing that the government of the Republic should have got so far out of the hands of the people; should have been captured by interests which are special and not general. In the train of this capture follow the troops of scandals, wrongs, indecencies, with which our politics swarm. . . . Why are we in the presence, why are we at the threshold, of a revolution? . . . Don't you know that this country from one end to another believes that something is wrong? . . . We are in a temper to reconstruct economic society, as we were once in a temper to reconstruct political society, and political society may itself undergo a radical modification in the process. . . . We are upon the eve of a great reconstruction. It calls for creative statesmanship.

And we may add right here for that very reason it calls for a deepened religious and moral insight and devotion. This thought is, one may almost say, uppermost in much of the leading literature of the time. Taking examples almost at random, one could mention H. G. Wells's *New Worlds for Old* and *Marriage*; Herrick's writings, notably *Together*, *The Common Lot*, and *The Healer*;

¹ See *The World's Work*, January, 1913, pp. 253 ff.

Churchill's *The Inside of the Cup*; and the morality play *Everywoman*—to indicate only a few.

2. The actual rapid development of social solidarity—of interdependence—through the industrial revolution and its consequences, noted above, is bringing rapidly to the foreground of reflective thought the concept of society as organic, in a deeper sense than that of the earlier crude analogies between society and the physical organism of a plant or animal. In the new organic concept (though for that matter older even than the writings of Paul) we are coming to interpret society as composed of interdependent members, social by their very nature, specialized in function, and co-operating together for the attainment of the general end of democracy, as the true organic society in which freedom and reciprocal service are the characteristics.¹ This conception has developed rapidly within the last dozen or fifteen years. When, for example, in 1895, Professor Small published in the *Journal of Sociology* his article "Private Business Is a Public Trust," he was assailed as an "impractical visionary" by some who should have known better. But today the insurance investigations, the money-power inquiries, and the graft and trust prosecutions are enforcing that statement of the organic relationships of man as a recognized commonplace of social wisdom.

3. The rapid transformation of social customs within the past century, moreover, has enforced the conviction that society is not in any sense fixed but is evolving. The idea that the theory of evolution must apply to society as well as to the lower forms of life has become thoroughly accepted by the general public and this idea, together with that of the organic concept, is bound to affect profoundly the religion of the modern man—indeed, is already doing so.² This is well recognized as a mere fact. But just *how* the evolutionary concept is affecting the religious views of modern men is not so generally recognized. From the point of view of the

¹ From this point of view, a brief, useful definition of a society is simply: An organism of conscious members. Cf. Ellwood, *Sociology in Its Psychological Aspects*, pp. 12-15, 131, 143, 388-495.

² From the above point of view, evolution may be defined as: Development from the less organic to the more organic; involving an increase of consciousness and of self-control.

older philosophy and religion of authority, reality and truth are fixed and unchanging, and only man's apprehension or knowledge of them is growing. But the consciousness of men today has violently revolted against this view for three reasons: (1) because the doctrine of the infinite worth of the individual taught by Christianity, and passionately believed by the people, is flatly contradicted by such a view; (2) because, in an organic universe, growth or change in any part means growth or change in every part; and (3) because this doctrine of the fixed universal and the changing particular has not only denied the organic nature of the world, the reality of progress, and consequently the worth of the individual, but has been persistently used throughout history, as the fundamental doctrine of political, ecclesiastical, and social aristocracy, to keep the elect few in positions of privilege and power, and the masses of the people in ignorance and servitude. But we have now reached a time when this can no longer successfully be done. Men are convinced that evolution is real—that absolutely new values are being constantly produced in the world by the constructive activity of men—that progress is not an illusion and a sham, but that the blood and struggle of earth's martyrs and toilers have made positive contributions to the universe—that the Christian doctrine of the dignity of personality is a vindicated fact—that aristocracy is blasphemy against Personality—and that democracy, as the ideal of a thoroughly organic society, is the only tenable view of the world order.¹ There is no other way to interpret the growing modern revolt against external, arbitrary authority, and the passion for democracy. Where the religious leaders try to enforce the old view, they are failing; and where they adopt the new view, they are succeeding!²

4. The rapid expansion of knowledge in recent years has deepened the conviction that not merely material things, but truth itself, is in process of evolution. Here we touch upon delicate and disputed ground, involving a revision and redefinition of the very nature of truth. Briefly put, the definition formerly current,

¹ "The theory of evolution, as applied to man, recognizes human endeavor as the essential condition of further progress."—Coe, *Religion of a Mature Mind*, p. 396.

² See Strong, *The New Era; The Challenge of the City*, pp. 199-234; and his *Religious Movements for Social Betterment*, especially pp. 85-88.

under the earlier régime of external authority, was that truth is by nature fixed, and as such promulgated by superior authorities to the ignorant masses. Any such thing as growth or development in truth meant simply external additions to it, which in no wise compelled a reorganization of its constitution or essential character. But today with our convictions of the organic nature and evolution of the world, we are being logically forced to the further conviction that any such thing as real growth, even of truth, means a reconstruction of it as an instrument to meet essentially new conditions of life. If this seems to be the pragmatic view of truth, it is nevertheless apparently inevitable. It is difficult to get back of the apparent teaching of history that what one age universally agrees to call truth (because conduct in accordance therewith satisfies the practical needs of the time), a later age modifies into a fundamentally different construction of truth in order therewith to meet its own growing practical needs—illustrated in the theory of the solar system as modified by the practical requirements growing out of the discoveries and explorations of the Renaissance. From this point of view, then, truth would be a statement or formulation of observed coexistences and sequences made with reference to social experience and for the purpose of directing it to the fulfilment of the ends growing out of the social needs of the time.¹ In other words, the view of truth which is gaining currency today makes it thoroughly a teleological instrument. Of course, this raises the whole question as to the ultimate standard by which the truth (as well as progress and other constituents of a real evolution) may be determined. The practical determination of this ultimate standard of life is, indeed, the very heart of the religious problem. This we shall take up presently.

5. The remarkable increase of scientific control over nature during the last hundred years has not been without its influence

¹ This view of truth is not without its difficulties, chief of which is the determination of the standard or criterion; but the writer is convinced that its difficulties, even on this point, are far less than those of the absolutist doctrine of a fixed universal. A clear exposition of the logical necessity of the newer pragmatic view is to be found in Dewey, *Studies in Logical Theory*, chap. i, and especially chap. v by Miss Thompson (Mrs. Paul Wooley) on the problem of the nature of reality and of the relation of thought to reality.

at this point in defining in the public mind the nature of truth and the value of the scientific method in all realms of thought and practice. It has been no small factor in the transition we have noted from the submission to dogmatic authority to the assertion of the independence of the individual, as capable of setting up suitable ends for his conduct, and of devising and applying the means to attain them, with full recognition and fulfilment of the similar rights of others. This has led to a new conception of law, not as an instrument of despotism applied by an external power, but rather as an instrument of freedom applied by the individual himself through a clear understanding of his own nature and needs. Law, in this modern conception, becomes thus a formulation of conditions of action and of the consequences that may be expected to flow from those conditions. The whole object and method of science is to state conditions and consequences in such a form as to be ultimately useful for the guidance of conduct; and this is equally true whether the law be a civil one, formulated by a legislature in a state capitol, or a so-called natural law, formulated by a scientist in a laboratory. With the development of our legislative reference bureaus and other social science agencies, we are rapidly coming to see today that all laws are, in principle, the same; that social laws are as "natural" as the laws of physics, chemistry, or biology; and that the chief difference is that the laws of the traditional natural sciences have thus far been more accurately formulated, and therefore more permanently useful; partly because the natural scientists deal, in a sense, with more general or universal conditions, and partly because they deal with simpler conditions which they have been able to isolate and study by the laboratory method. With this understanding of law, freedom becomes conduct, not in opposition to or in disregard for law, but in accordance with the accurately formulated law of man's own nature. It is as true of social life as of the forces of inanimate nature that, as Bacon said, "In order to rule nature you must obey her." Now, this perception that nature, after all, must be obeyed leads us still deeper into the problem of man's constitution and his relation to the universe, and ultimately leads to the truth which religion emphasizes that we are all organically

related to the great universe, in which we live and move and have our being, and to which we are inexorably required to render loyal service as members, if we are to remain free, healthy, and effective beings.

6. The growth of such a consciousness in the world has naturally been attended by a gradual transformation of physical conflict into rational co-operation as a means of adjusting diverse interests and uniting classes and nations. With the growth of natural science and of the scientific method as applied to social relations, the abandonment of war and the adoption of arbitration as a method of social progress is as certain as the coming of tomorrow's sunlight. But the very sun of that illumination is the growing consciousness that deep in the nature of all of us is the tendency toward the larger life of co-operation, of mutual service, of fraternity which we may thwart only to our injury, and which we may deny only to our ultimate destruction. "There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will." All persons feel this instinctively, the great characters of history with the deepest intensity. Lincoln voiced this perception when he said, "A thing is never settled until it is settled right"; and again when he said, "The question is not whether the Lord is on our side in this war but whether we are on the Lord's side."

7. Another striking practical tendency of our time which emphasizes this same change of world view is the rapid spread of philanthropy, and the new sense of sympathy. If we are really organically related, and thus each needful for the welfare of all, then every human being is worthy of respect as a person, as a comrade, however humble, co-operating, or created to co-operate, in the very construction, advancement, and enrichment of the universe. It is this conception which accounts for the growing sense of dignity of the individual, and the angry protest of increasing millions when that dignity is outraged. As Tolstoi proclaims in words that are today echoed in all lands, "There are no relations in which human beings may be treated without love."

8. Coming closer to the question of the end or ideal toward which conduct in its larger bearings should be directed, we find that the astronomical and geographical discoveries of recent

centuries have given us indeed a new heaven and a new earth. They have revolutionized the imagery of the whole universal theater of the drama of human life. Heaven, being no longer complacently and contentedly located above the clouds, nor hell securely beneath the earth, modern men have come to feel that the supreme goal or end of life is not a fixed heaven but a developing ideal of a glorious social order, being realized, and to be realized here on earth and now, as well as in the beyond and hereafter. More and more, therefore, does this heavenly goal take the form of a real social order, upon which humanity insists increasingly with a stern and burning enthusiasm, as, in Jesus' religious term, "the Kingdom of God," or in the philosophical term, "Democracy," or in the economic term, "the Co-operative Commonwealth," or in the political term, "the Republic." One-sided and confused as the formulations of these grand concepts sometimes are in the thought of their advocates, nevertheless they all point in the same direction.¹

9. The rapid increase of wealth during the industrial revolution of the last century, has rolled up an unprecedented economic surplus, or at any rate an abundance, which has, for the first time in history, given mankind a substantial hope of realizing this ideal of democracy—of the kingdom of comradeship on earth—as more than a mere utopian dream. It is becoming for millions of men today a real religious ideal for which they are willing to lay down their lives, and for which in some places they are laying down their lives. Though flouted by the short-sighted as visionaries, and though denounced by the arch-materialists themselves as mere materialists seeking only the dollars and the fleshpots, nevertheless these soldiers of the common good the world over are recruiting their ranks and gradually silencing their enemies by a heroism,

¹ "The Christian conception of life is all contained in that of the kingdom of God."—Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*, p. 168. Any difficulty experienced in identifying Democracy, or the Republic, or the Co-operative Commonwealth with the Kingdom of God arises from our habit of thinking of God as outside of his world, and hence of these ideals of the "secular" order as inherently mean and comparatively unworthy—the usual fallacy of the distinction between the sacred and the secular. We need to remember the commandment of Elbert Hubbard: "Remember the week day to keep it holy." And such a religion men are beginning to insist upon.

a persistence, and a growing altruistic devotion and spiritual insight, that is correcting their own vision and rapidly enlisting the enthusiasm of the world.

10. Finally, the wider contacts of individuals and groups with diverse peoples and customs today are bringing about a cosmopolitanism of tastes and a tolerance of judgments which are further signs of the coming realization of the larger democracy. This enlargement of the perceptions and intellectual apprehensions of mankind is resulting in a remarkable, deepened sense of the psychical, and a remarkable development of the phases of religion heretofore neglected by a traditional Christianity. It certainly seems true, as Professor James assured us, that we are living today in an age characterized by a religious awakening and an enthusiastic search for the deeper meanings of life such as marked the early history of Christianity. And if we fail to recognize this fact, it is largely due to our narrow-minded inability to see the general trend for good in the newer forms of religious and moral aspiration that are making their way among us—not all, to be sure, without error, and not any without important truth. A mere list of such new forms of the spiritual life is suggestive: Organized philanthropy, social service, laymen's missionary movements, Sunday-school reform, psychical research, spiritualism, Christian Science, New Thought, theosophy, gifts of tongues, psychical therapeutics—their number is without end—and their diversity is a challenge and a demand for a deeper understanding and wider practice of true religion.

IV. DEFINITION AND ELEMENTS OF RELIGION

How then shall we define religion? Let us say provisionally that it is the social function devoted to maintaining the individual consciously in organic living relations with the universe as a whole—a function in which the worship of deity occupies the central place: expressed by prayer on the one hand and devoted social service on the other.¹ In every religion, however primitive, there are

¹ Jesus seems to have drawn no hard-and-fast line between religion and morality—stating that the whole law is summed up in love to God and to man. The writer takes that view—that the social functions of both are practically identical: to bring

certain elements which, as civilization advances, become more and more clearly understood as the basis of so-called higher religious aspirations and conceptions. (1) Thus, the most primitive impulse of all, the will to live, becomes understood as the basis of the doctrine of eternal life. Under the influence of Christianity, this doctrine becomes one not of the duration of life merely, but of the quality of life as well, and becomes further a prophecy and a certainty of its reality. (2) A second religious element, the consciousness of the power of personal initiative (however illusive some have imagined this consciousness to be), is the basis, after all, of our modern conviction of personal worth, responsibility, and moral freedom, when interpreted as indicating co-operation with the powers of the universe in the evolution of a better world. (3) The consciousness of this ideal of the better world, and of the "Power not merely ourselves" with whom we are permitted to co-operate, becomes the basis of our conception of the supreme good and of God. (4) Our consciousness of personal responsibility is not a mere convention, a meaningless tradition inculcated by

men into active loyalty to the Good. Religion is the deeper aspect of morality which, through the consciousness of fellowship with God, furnishes the dynamic for the moral life. Cf. Coe, *The Religion of a Mature Mind*: "In religion our subjection to a moral law transforms itself into a personal relationship of love and fellowship whence flow satisfactions for all sides of our higher nature" (p. 154). Cf. also, p. 58: "Religion seeks to adjust the whole man to ultimate reality"; see pp. 220-21: "Vital progress at the present stage depends upon our discovering how to unite ethical endeavor with personal communion with God, or rather upon our finding that the outward and the inward sides are one and inseparable"; p. 249: "Know that the religious experience is not something different from living a good life, but is just living it more abundantly. It is the inmost being of such a life"; p. 73: of the obstacles to the Christian religion, "the one most characteristic of our age is the authoritative form assumed by official Christianity"; p. 281: "From this as well as other causes, there has sprung up an unofficial religion which refuses to have anything to do with the churches, or at most accords them cold approval rather than personal adhesion. The chief ingredient of this unofficial religion is morality, neighborliness, sympathy, sincerity in human relations [as witnessed in the social settlements]. But it is very often reverent, even trustful, toward God, and though it lacks organization, it becomes a real basis of fellowship between men"; p. 289: "This completion of the social communion in religion gives the church her specific task in the new age"; p. 319: "If democracy is to be more than the collective caprice of the crowd, on the one hand, or more than a fragment of biological machinery, on the other, the deepest fact in the individual must be the presence of the Eternal." Cf. Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order*, chap. vi, on "Social Christianity and Personal Religion," especially footnote, pp. 110-11.

parental or social instruction, but has a pragmatic basis in the very fact, learned by stern experience, that we are organic members of the universe, of whom some special functions are required upon the penalty of suffering, death, and negation. (5) The consciousness of sin is another indication of the same doctrine of our individual responsibility in the service of the Good, and arises when we have failed in that service. More objectively, two facts stand out as elements of religion: (6) the universal fact of loyalty—heroism—martyrdom, manifested in parental, social, industrial, or patriotic devotion; (7) and the fact of the very penal (or civil) law itself, which, by imposing penalties, recognizes personal responsibility, freedom, power of initiative, and obligation of the individual to serve the Good. A purely mechanical world, which some of our “natural” scientists seem to be trying to believe in, would leave no place for individual initiative and responsibility, hence no place for the civil law itself as the form in which responsibility is enforced; and morals, religion, and government would have no meaning, because there could be no moral standard or criterion of conduct in a world whose events were determined by a purely mechanical causation.¹

V. OUTLINE OF THE SOCIAL CONSTITUTION

Having surveyed, although briefly, the conditions of present church inefficiency; the transition from the older religious point of view to the present; and the practical causes and conditions of

¹ The logical error, of which natural science seems to be in some danger at this point, is apparently due to three causes: (1) The confusion of determinateness of sequence, which is a scientific fact, with determinism, which is a philosophical dogma; (2) the mistake of using the concept of mechanical causation (which is serviceable in formulating methods of economic production) as a complete explanation of activity in other functions, such as those of education, morality, and government (where, as we have seen, mere mechanical causation would be incompatible with the existence of those functions); and (3) the persistence of the older concepts of law as external, and of truth and reality as fixed. These notions are also at the bottom of the current, but passing, conception that the natural is the realm of law, and the supernatural the realm of lawless caprice. “This unhappy misconception of the relation of the natural to the supernatural has led the great body of uncritical thinkers into the grotesque inversion of all reason—the more law and order, the less God.”—Coe, *Religion of a Mature Mind*, p. 351. For a good discussion of the inadequacy of the earlier materialistic, rationalistic, and humanistic views of life, see Eucken, *Meaning and Value of Life*.

this change, with some consideration of the definition and elements of religion; we are now in a position to come to close quarters with the question of the particular place of religion in modern life. In order adequately to deal with this question, we shall need to undertake the difficult task of outlining the ground pattern of the *social constitution* itself; and having done so, to place religion in its functional relation to the other elements of the constitution.

First of all, then, in facing the bewildering array of social facts, we shall need to secure a method of approach or principle of analysis, whereby we may classify them. What is the modern scientific principle of classification? Is it not essentially to arrange in a genetic series the different types of phenomena dealt with, so as to reveal the order and method by which they are successively produced? Certainly this is the principle of the classifications which the modern vital sciences of botany and zoölogy have found so fruitful of practical usefulness. And logically this seems to be the only effective method of scientific classification, for, if our above definition of law is correct, the object of science is so to state phenomena as to reveal their genetic relations to one another, and thus the method of controlling them.¹

Adopting, then, this principle for the analysis of the complex social activities, we ask what form is taken by the characteristic activities of infancy and of primitive man and then what forms these simpler activities take on at further stages in the development of intelligence or of civilization. From this point of view it is manifest that the earliest activities take the general form of instinctive impulses, characterized by the motor tendency to accomplish certain life-preserving ends, such as those of food and defense, without any clear consciousness of either the ends to be attained or previous instruction in the methods of attaining them.² These earliest impulses, we may say, are mainly propulsive (or volitional in that sense), with very little of the intellectual or

¹ See Dewey, "The Evolutionary Method as Applied to Morality," *Philosophical Review*, March, 1902, XI, 107 ff. Also cf. Dewey, "Logical Conditions of a Scientific Treatment of Morality," *Decennial Publications of the University of Chicago*, Vol. III, Part. 2.

² Cf. Ellwood, *Sociology in Its Psychological Aspects*, chap. VII, on "The Origin of Society," and chap. IX, on "The Rôle of Instinct in the Social Life."

emotional elements in them. They represent the will to live in its lowest human terms. Feeling there of course is attending these impulses, but evaluating them only very vaguely because of the absence of any definite formulation of the end or system of conduct to be realized. But as the child and the race develop, these random and loosely related impulses become formed into more and more organic and powerful systems, composed of those acts found to be satisfactory in securing adaptation of organism and environment to each other, through successive projections and realizations of the end. This accepted biological doctrine of the adjustment of the organism and the environment, now applied in interpreting social activities, connotes three elementary phases of adjustment. (1) The immediate or sustenance phase, characterized by instinctive and reflex activities, in which the immediate end is directly realized without any considerable consciousness of its value in relation to the larger end of life as a whole—as, for example, the sustenance activities of young animals or of infants, or in general the activities of any “hand to mouth” mode of life. This gives us the logical ground for classifying the manual vocations—involving the functions of sustenance and of economic production as the primary vocations. But these activities soon reach a point (in the history of the child and the race, and in the logic of conduct itself) where the immediate ends cannot be realized without reference to the system of ends in which they must function as organic members. (2) Thus the mediating or control phase of adjustment arises, in which distinction of means and ends are developed, and the larger controlling end of life is more or less definitely defined, adopted, and organized—as in the characteristic activities of later childhood and early adolescence, or the ordinary acts of reflection, invention, devotion, and self control. This second phase gives us the logical and sociological position of the learned vocations—involving the functions of education, religion, and government—as secondary. (3) But when activities have become organized with due reference to the end involved in their fulfilment, the third or final phase of adjustment arises, in which the intellectual distinctions of means and ends fall into the background and life activities again become more immediate,

but now filled with the meaning and value derived from the second phase of experience—as, for example, in the romantic and idealized activities characteristic of later adolescence and early maturity—or in the acts of play and artistic creation. This gives us the position in society of the expressional vocations—involving the functions of recreation and art. When the true is adopted as the good it inevitably becomes the beautiful; when the individual, properly nourished in childhood, learns, in adolescence, to organize his life upon the principle of his membership in an organic society, he becomes in later life an artistic worker, conscious of life's values and efficient and enthusiastic in producing them; and when a nation or race has laid its foundation in adequate economic development, and ordered its activities by educational, religious and governmental control, its classical age of recreation and art follows—the values of which are passed on into the succeeding cycles of a larger social evolution, deepening consciousness and ever widening the meaning of life.

It would seem, as a matter of observed fact, that experience is developed by successive cycles of these three phases of maintenance, control, and valuation, with their subordinate functions of sustenance, production, education, religion, government, recreation and art;¹ manifested correspondingly in the microcosm of the self, or individual life, and in the macrocosm of the universe, or the social life.² This (as illustrated in the accompanying diagram

¹ Cf. Small's classification of social "interests" in his *General Sociology*, pp. 198, 435, 444, 480, 542-43; and Ellwood's criticism of this classification in his *Sociology in Its Psychological Aspects*, p. 286. The above discussion of the present writer aims to supply a scientific principle of analysis and classification of the elementary social functions or vocational interests, as furnishing the groundwork or outline of the dynamic criterion of conduct, demanded by the modern pragmatic or teleological view of life, as advocated in this paper.

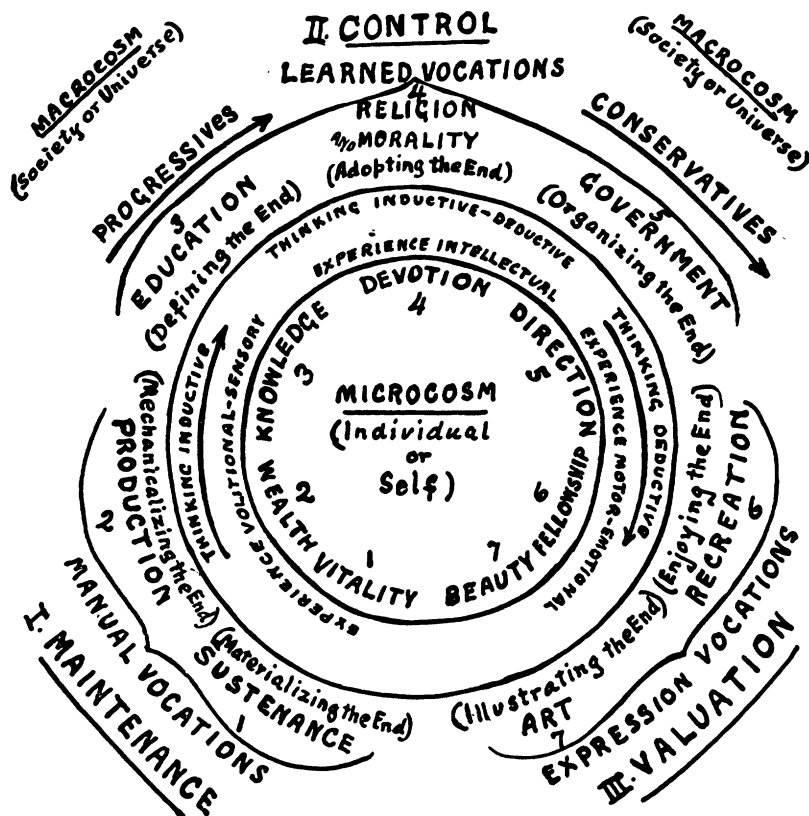
² The theory of correspondence between the microcosm and the macrocosm, as herein set forth, is more than the recapitulation theory of the biologists. It refers to certain universal stages through which intelligence unfolds according to the logic of its own nature, whether in a history of the race, or of the individual, or of a series of acts directed to a given end. The thesis is that all conscious life is constructed on a single organic principle of adaptation. This is being more or less clearly emphasized by many writers. Cf. Patten, "Each epoch and each person recapitulates the thought history of the race; the new always begins with crude vital values which are gradually transformed into those that more fully express our complex civiliza-

of The Social Constitution as an Organic Circuit of Social Functions) means that the standard of an evolving world is a growing system of social functions in an organic equilibrium of thoroughly reciprocal services, each individual interest or social vocation being maintained at maximum efficiency as an essential organ of the whole social system.

To illustrate the use of this standard as explaining social relationships, let it be observed that thinking is necessarily inductive, on the whole, in those occupations in which (as in sustenance and production) men are without an adequate formulation of the end of their conduct, and are pressing forward toward such a formulation. In the intellectual occupations of social control, however, where ends and hypotheses are tried out and adopted, thinking is alternately inductive and deductive, or experimental, in character. But as soon as the end thus formulated and adopted is applied as a regulative principle through the function of government, thinking becomes habitually and strongly deductive, because the concern is then with making the particulars of life conform to the end or standard and express it. This gives us the logical distinction between the progressives and the conservatives—the universal and normal division of parties in society—and explains why the former, the progressives, struggling for a new social order, are usually made up of the more intelligent manual workers, the educators and philanthropic workers, and why the latter, the conservatives, insisting upon the old social order, are usually made up of the classes in positions of governmental authority. It also shows why the contention between these two parties is keenest in religious and moral matters—because it is in the function of devotion, where the supreme controlling end is decided upon, that the transition is made from social induction—a reaching after the new order—to social deduction—insistence upon the previously established order. For—especially with long continuance of the officials in office—

tion.”—*The Social Basis of Religion*, pp. 66–67; cf. also *ibid.*, p. 152; also Coe, *Education in Religion and Morals*, chaps. xiv and xv, on “The Periods of Development”; Hall, *Youth: Its Education, Regimen, and Hygiene*, chap. I, on “Pre-Adolescence,” chap. VII, on “Faults, Lies, and Crimes,” chap. IX, on “The Growth of Social Ideals,” and chap. XII, on “Moral and Religious Training”; Forbush, *The Boy Problem*, chap. I, on “Social Development”; and especially Forbush, *The Coming Generation*, table of parallel epochs on p. 45.

government (whether of the state, the church, the school, or of industry) tends to become extremely conservative, and even reactionary—unless the officials can be held thoroughly responsible to the public they serve.



OUTLINE OF THE SOCIAL CONSTITUTION

AS AN

ORGANIC CIRCUIT OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

VI. THE LOGICAL SOCIAL POSITION OF RELIGION

The particular place, then, of religion in society is logically between the functions of education and government, and is concerned with bringing about the adoption of the ends defined by

education; leaving them for the government to realize in the attainment of social order, and further for recreation and art to value and glorify in the attainment of the higher culture. Looked at in this way, religion occupies a most critical and important position in life: the position of bringing human beings to an actual decision in favor of the larger, the fraternal, the altruistic, the whole-hearted life of the Kingdom of God, in which alone love and health and abiding joy, and heroic endurance, and the deepest appreciation of the values of existence are permanently possible.¹

VII. SPECIAL SERVICE OF RELIGION TO THE PRESENT AGE

And now as to the particular service which religion may render the age in which we live, let us observe, first of all, that our age has been predominantly an age devoted to the functions of sustenance and production. These functions have been over-emphasized. We have been in the past fifty or sixty years rapidly developing the function of education. We have reached our national period of early adolescence, in which the larger social ends begin to interest us, because the formulation and adoption of them at this point is essential to our national development.² It would seem that we are approaching what may reasonably be called our natural period of national conversion, or, failing in that, a period of criminality and degeneracy, leading to national decline. As President Wilson and, indeed, all the seers and sages of the time tell us, we have now reached a crisis when, if society is to escape great suffering and avoid a setback to progress, we must deliberately adopt and put into practice the social ends that have been coming to consciousness in our system of public education. And these ends are those of the organic society which we call a democracy or republic, in

¹ It is noteworthy that the social interpretation of the religious ideal is gaining ground today with tremendous rapidity in the writings of such religious leaders as Peabody, Mathews, Henderson, Rauschenbusch, and Strong (the last especially in his periodical publication, *The Gospel of the Kingdom*); and in such vital religious movements as the Student Volunteer Movement; the Y.M.C.A.; The Layman's Missionary Movement; the Federal Council of Churches; the Men and Religion Forward Movement, with its remarkable Social Service Platform; the new church Brotherhoods, all emphasizing social service; and, in foreign countries, the German Inner Mission and the propaganda of Abdul Baha, the Persian—to mention only a few.

² Cf. Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, chap. I, on "Religious Awakening."

which no man or group of men may be allowed to monopolize the privileges and sustenance of the people, nor set for them the ends which they are to pursue, without their own choice and decision in the matter. We have noted the alienation of the working masses from the church. They are today wandering in the wilderness of poverty and subjection to the purposes of others. They are groping for the supreme end of life which religion alone can supply. Without adequate participation in education, religion, and government, the lives of the majority of men and women today are short-circuited and enfeebled, lacking in consistent direction and self-control, and are for that very reason inefficient in production and dissipated in recreation. But men are beginning an angry and ominous protest against their exclusion by our present industrial system from the power of deciding upon and adopting the ends for which their own labor is expended. Employers complain everywhere that workmen take no interest in their work, but labor without loyalty and without enthusiasm only for their weekly wages. How could they do otherwise? A joyous, free, and efficient industry never will be developed in this or any other country until we enable all men, and women too, intelligently to adopt the ends for which they are paying out the energy of their lives. Only then can mankind labor with enthusiasm and efficiency, as conscious of the value of their work. And only when the masses of mankind secure an adequate participation in education, religion, and government, will the butcheries and robberies of production and the debaucheries of recreation and art cease to torment the land. Religion has a mighty work to perform today in bringing us back to our better selves and inspiring us with the vision of the generous social order of fraternity and good will among men. It has the practical work at hand of bringing about social righteousness and realizing a divine social order. The church, as the chief messenger of religion, can never regain her rightful honors among the people until she realizes that the religion of today must be a practical and a growing religion, courageous with the spirit of the crusader against social wrong, and with the vision of the prophet of the better age that is coming. She must understand that the cure for the evils of democracy is more democracy. She must

recognize humanitarian movements of the age as essentially religious, and seek to inspire them with a consciousness of the sustaining presence of God. The secret of her weakness is, as Bishop Williams says, that "she preaches, for the most part, a narrow and petty round of ethics, the minor moralities of purely personal conduct, respectabilities, good form, technical pieties, and ecclesiastical proprieties, while the age is seeking the larger righteousness of the kingdom of God, which is 'human society organized according to the will of God'"; but "more and more prophets are heard in her pulpits, pleading for and proclaiming the larger righteousness of economic justice and social equity, as distinguished from the narrower righteousness of merely personal respectability, the righteousness of the Kingdom as distinguished from the righteousness of the solitary individual."¹ How in detail this larger kingdom of social righteousness shall be attained we have yet to learn; but first of all we must learn the meaning of modern religion when it bids us "seek first the kingdom of God." For this kingdom is the normal social order, the standard of truth and justice, within which all other ends must find their subordinate places—a truly organic society of duly balanced functions in which every member shall participate with at least a reasonable degree of freedom, health, and efficiency.

¹ "The conflict between Religion and the Church," in *The American Magazine*, June, 1911, LXXII, 147 ff. It is no easy task for the older leaders of the country to readjust their conceptions, developed under the simpler, more isolated living of a former age, to meet the needs of the present corporate modes of existence. And the ministers are not alone in this difficulty. The judges and political leaders are very decidedly facing the same problem. The conservatives are vainly trying to stand pat, and the progressives are struggling for a formulation of the new order.